

## "I AM PERSUADED"

Message by  
Willis E. Bishop

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

"Nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38, 39)

One day in a Christian book store I saw a plaque which read something like this: "I said to Christ -- how much do you love me? Then He stretched out His hands and died for me."

The Scripture says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). And you and I know that is exactly what Christ did for us.

Now, in these two verses (Romans 8:38, 39) Paul states very clearly that absolutely nothing can separate us from that love!

### I. Notice the first thing Paul mentions: death

This is the most tremendous enemy that you and I face. But death is a defeated foe. Christ conquered it when He rose from the dead that first Easter morning.

And, remember what He said to Martha at the tomb of Lazarus? "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live!" Yes, Christ will go with us through the valley and lovingly usher us into the better life beyond.

Do you hear the voice of the wife of a South American missionary as she was departing this life, quoting the Apostle Paul and saying, "O death, where is thy sting?"

No, death cannot separate us from Him who loved us. In fact, it ushers us into His very presence -- praise God!

### II. Paul next mentions: life

Each of our lives is different. There are as many paths as there are people. Since Paul is talking about what might separate us from Christ, let us suppose that some of us are not living as close to the Lord today as we ought. Perhaps we have even gone far from Him. Living that way can certainly make a believer miserable -- there will be loss of reward and commendation -- there will be awful shame in His presence. But all this cannot separate us from His love. Nothing in life can!

And then there is I John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all

unrighteousness." If this is talking about you, why don't you do that just now? Experience anew the joy of your salvation.

Moses said (Deut. 33:27), "Underneath are the everlasting arms." Paul, in another place (Rom. 14:8), said, "whether we live or die, we are the Lord's."

Life cannot separate us from His love!

III. Then Paul mentions angels, principalities, powers -- the invisible forces that might be against us.

In Revelation 5, John counts some of the angels around the throne of God -- ten thousand times ten thousand. That's 100 million. And then he adds: "and thousands of thousands."

In Revelation 12 verse 4, it is implied that at the revolt of Satan in heaven as many as one-third of the angelic realm followed him. These evil forces are a powerful foe, and we must respect them.

In the book of Jude, even Michael the archangel -- the leader of God's angelic forces -- dared not revile Satan but turned him over to the Lord Himself.

But, James 4:7 says, "resist the devil and he will flee from you." He is a defeated foe -- and Paul says that all his forces can never separate us from the love of Christ!

IV. Next on Paul's list: "things present and things to come"

Things present may perplex us. Many of us can probably say, "Lord, I don't understand this or that in my life," or "Lord, why this?," or "Lord, why me?"

Things to come -- the future -- may concern us -- fill us with fear and despair. But that's because we forget that Christ loves us with an everlasting love today and in the future. Isn't there a song? --

I don't know about tomorrow  
I just live from day to day.  
I don't borrow from its sunshine,  
For its skies may turn to gray.

I don't worry o'er the future,  
For I know what Jesus said.  
And today I'll walk beside Him,  
For He knows what is ahead.

Many things about tomorrow  
I don't seem to understand.  
But I know who holds tomorrow,  
And I know who holds my hand.

V. Again, Paul says: "neither height nor depth"

Astronomers do not know the size of our multiverse. How many years has that one probe of our government been speeding at a tremendous rate out into outer space and it is not done yet!

And no one knows all that is hidden in the inside of this earth of ours! If you could dig straight down and keep digging, theoretically, you would come out, not in China, but in the Indian Ocean. It is quite evident no one will ever dig that deep. I have read that the deeper you bore into the earth the hotter it gets -- one degree every sixty feet. At thirty miles down rocks would melt.

The Soviet Union has drilled a hole that is more than seven miles deep, G E O magazine reports. That's a mile deeper than any other hole on Earth and deeper than the deepest ocean abyss. The hole goes down 39,571 feet near the village of Murmansk on the Kola Peninsula. Begun fourteen years ago in a quest for gas and oil, it is scheduled to reach 49,215 feet -- that's almost ten miles! It is three feet in diameter for the first mile, then it narrows to eight inches.

But let us not worry. There will never be found anything in the heights or depths that will separate us from God's love. The Bible says so.

VI. And finally -- Paul mentions "any other created thing"

I would say that is a lawyer's clause to cover any possible thing that is not covered by death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height or depth. Absolutely nothing can separate us from our Saviour's love.

Another way of saying it: "Safe here -- safe hereafter -- forever safe -- forevermore." No wonder Paul wrote just a few verses earlier, verse 31: "If God is for us, who can be against us?"

I want to make it perfectly clear that my remarks pertain only to the saved among us -- those who have knelt spiritually at the foot of the cross, have repented of their sins and called upon the Lord in His mercy and love to save them. For whoever calls meaningfully in this way will be saved. Read Romans 10:13 and find out!

A visitor said to a wounded soldier who lay dying in a hospital, "What church are you of?" The soldier replied, "The Church that Christ founded." "No," said the visitor, "I mean what persuasion are you of?" The dying man, beaming with the love of the Saviour, answered, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."